

Get Your Money

A Newsletter by Assegai Communications

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Dear Reader

Reading time: 4 minutes

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CUSTOMER SERVICE IS GREAT, BUT ...

There is no question about it. Good customer service is an essential characteristic of a good business. Some would argue, that it is more than just a typical element of a good business – it is a survival tool. Unless you offer good service, you will not be able to compete.

And yet, many of the acolytes of customer service go too far. Listening to them, you almost get the impression that nothing else counts – look after your customer and he will look after you. Poppy cock, I say (I can't say anything stronger in a public newsletter). Beware of overdoing customer service, to the point of grovelling. People will simply take advantage of you.

We have all seen the 'nice guy' who works really hard for his customers, but gets nothing in return. Well, he gets more orders, but very little money. He battles to make ends meet. That is the folly – and the reward – of over doing customer service.

There are those who offer excellent products and service to their customers, get good orders and get their money. They are doing something different from 'Mr. Nice Guy'. They are refusing to be taken for a ride, because they emphasise the dual nature of a business

transaction; on the one hand, good service, on the other – payment. Take good note of the people and businesses who recognise the two sides of the ‘good business coin’. You will find that they have learned one of the core principles of really successful business practice – “Making it easy for your customer to pay you, is one of the signs of great customer service.”

Everybody welcomes a peaceful, friendly atmosphere and business environment. Very few people enjoy the tension of money squabbles. And yet, business people – and salespeople in particular seem to believe that the mention of money will kill off the wonderful relationship they have with their customer. Nothing could be further from the truth. Money needs to be a visible part of the process at all times. If you can, from the outset of any transaction, make the financial side concise and clear, you will be able to pursue payment without regret. Your customer needs to know:

- Exactly how much money is due to you;
- Where, when and how payment is to be made;
- The penalty for failing to make payment on due date.

Your customer may also need to be reminded when to make payment. Be up-front about money, deal with the payment issue with clarity and confidence, and your debts will be fewer!

LEGAL NOTE: WHICH COURT?

If you find yourself having no choice but to issue a summons to recover money, make sure you do so, in the correct court. Can't you leave this to your attorney you might ask? No, you cannot. If your attorney receives an instruction to sue a debtor and notices that the summons must be issued from a court in another town, he will prepare the summons and send it to one of his colleagues in that other town, to attend to the issue of the summons, and to send it to the sheriff. As the case proceeds, you will find that you are paying two firms of attorneys, for that case.

What is the alternative? Know which court to use. The simple rule is this – the court which has jurisdiction (authority), is the court where the debtor resides, or carries on business at the time that the summons is issued.

FEEDBACK, PLEASE!

This newsletter number 5. How are we doing? We think it's a little too short, so the next one will be a little longer. What else would you like to see? Please send your suggestions to info@assegaicomunications.co.za .
